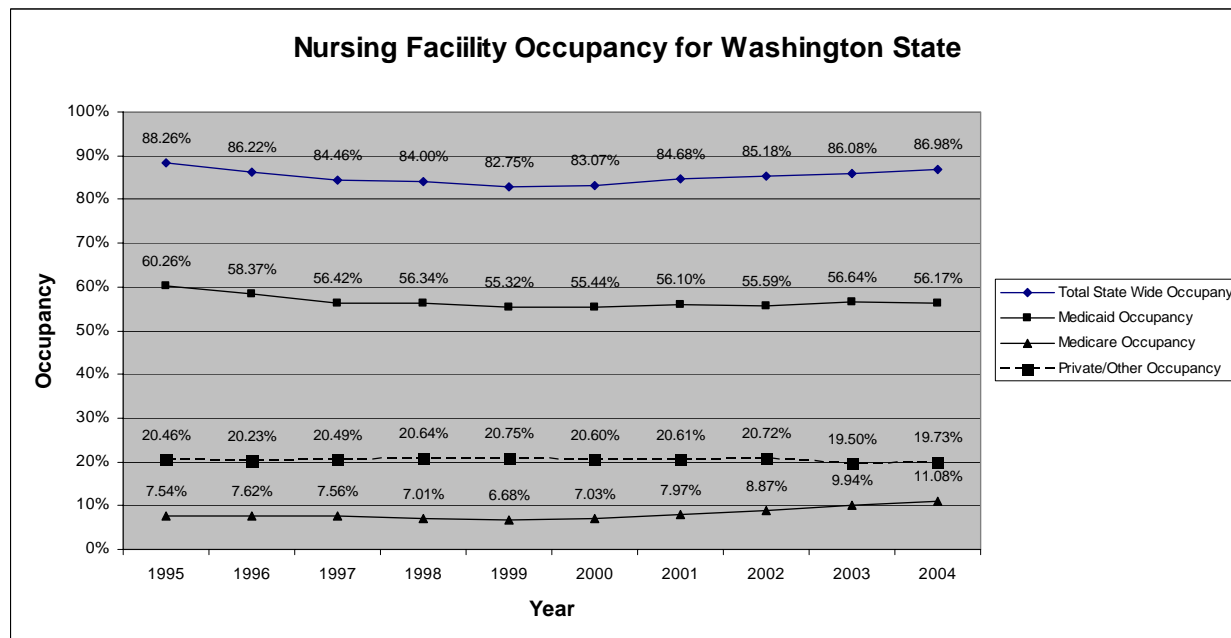


## Fact Sheet: Nursing Home Occupancy

### Background

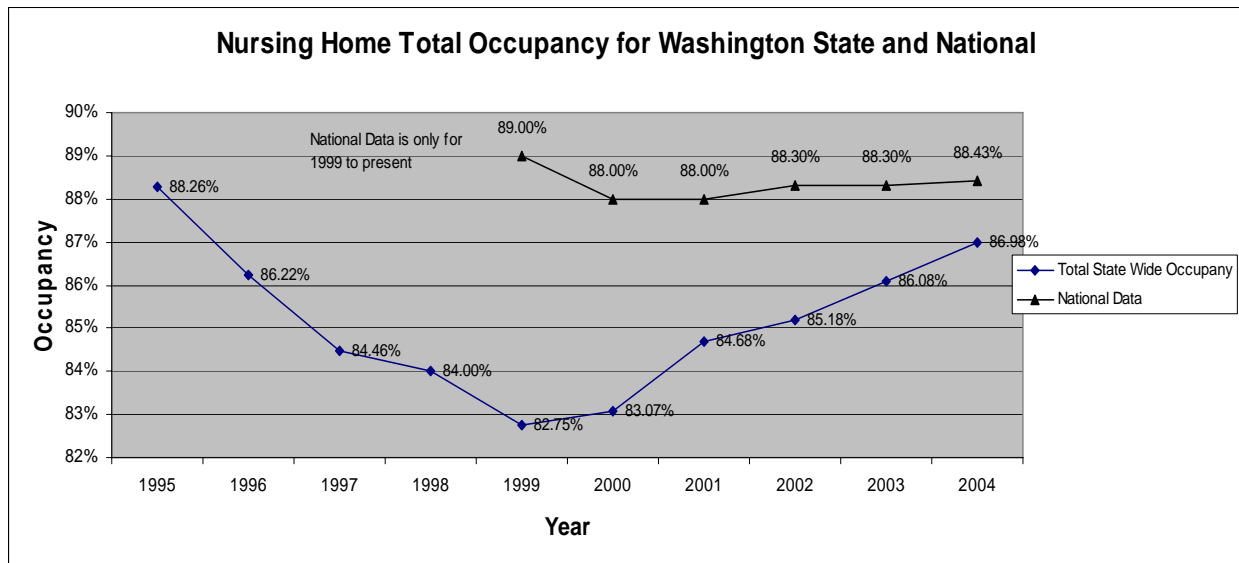
Occupancy rate is determined by dividing the total number of patient bed days per year by the total licensed bed days in the year. State law allows nursing homes to take off line, or “bank”, beds not currently used to provide nursing home care, while retaining bed licensure. Banked beds are not included in the calculation.

To what extent are nursing home beds occupied by Medicaid funded residents?



Medicaid continues to be by far the primary means of financing nursing home care.

How do nursing home occupancy rates in Washington compare with national rates?



Note on the above chart: National data is only available for 1999 to 2004.

Washington's total occupancy rate is approximately 1% lower than the national median and is the 21<sup>th</sup> lowest rate in the nation. Also, bed banking or similar adjustments are assumed not to be prevalent in the national data. This suggests that the gap between Washington and the national data may be greater than depicted.

Why are Washington nursing home occupancy rates lower than the national median?

It is difficult to determine specifically what factors have resulted in this low rate; however, the state's aggressive efforts to promote cost-effective home and community alternatives, along with growth of a well regulated boarding home and adult family home industry have certainly been key elements.